HABS No. AZ-159-C

Tucson Plant Materials Center, General
Utility Building (Building No. 2)
3241 North Romero Road
Tucson
Pima County
Arizona

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDING SURVEY

TUCSON PLANT MATERIALS CENTER
GENERAL UTILITY BUILDING
(BUILDING NO. 2)

HABS AZ-159-C

Location: The building is located at 3241 North Romero Road, Tucson, Arizona
Pima County, Arizona

USGS Jaynes Quadrangle (7'5), Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:

Z	E	N
12	499660	3569750

Present Owner: United States Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service

Present Use: Maintenance Shop / Conference / Storage

Significance: The General Utility Building, located at the historic building complex of the Tucson Plant Materials Center, is significant for its association with the initial construction and development of the first soil conservation nursery established in Arizona by the Soil Conservation Service. The Tucson Nursery represents one of the first group of 48 soil conservation nurseries built by the Soil Conservation Service from the beginning of 1935 through June, 1936. Completed by January, 1936, the General Utility Building was one of eight original buildings constructed at the complex. It functioned as a maintenance shop for farm implements and motorized vehicles. The building's large basement was used as the seed storage room. The General Utility Building is among the four remaining historic buildings at the site.

Part I. Descriptive Information

A. Physical Description

The General Utility Building is a large structure originally used as a shop and maintenance garage for agricultural equipment and as a seed storage facility for the Tucson Nursery. It is a detached building located within a closely grouped complex of historic and contemporary buildings. The building is centrally located within the complex, approximately 25 feet southwest of the Administration Building. Attached to the north wall of the General Utility Building is a 50 foot by 50 foot Lath House, built in 1963. Unpaved driveways surround the other three sides of the building. For a physical description and historic context of the Tucson Plant Materials Center, see HABS No. AZ-159.

The General Utility Building is a one-story "U" shaped building measuring 74 feet wide by 42 feet deep. The width of each ell is 19 feet. The building faces west and the central recessed bay formed by the two opposing wings is covered by a flat, wood framed roof. It is open to the west and features a concrete slab floor. The building is constructed of adobe brick walls, 12 inches thick, which are constructed on concrete foundations and fired brick stem walls. The exterior of the adobe walls are finished with pebble-dashed Portland cement plaster. The building is covered by a flat roof hidden behind low parapets. False wood vigas, approximately three feet on center, are located below the parapets.

The west wall is symmetrical about the sheltered recessed bay. The wall of the south wing features an eight foot wide doorway with an overhead steel coiling door. The opening originally contained a wood panel overhead door. The west wall of the north wing contains an off center entrance with a wood door and one, four foot wide multiple light steel awning window. The central bay consists of four eight foot wide wood panel overhead garage doors. Each door is separated by an eight inch by ten inch kerfed wood post. The north wall of the building is penetrated by one off center steel sash casement window. The south wall contains two openings. A four foot wide multiple light steel sash awning window is located off center to the west, and an original doorway, now infilled with plywood, is located at the east end of the wall.

The 74 foot long east wall of the General Utility Building features four windows and two doorways. A single leaf, non-original flush wood door provides access to the north wing. Three evenly located steel sash multiple light awning windows penetrate the central portion of the wall. A solid core flush door, that is a replacement of the original door, gives access to the automobile repair garage. To its south is a small steel sash casement bathroom window.

The interior of the south wing contains a large woodworking and metal shop, measuring 17 feet wide by 27 feet deep. It has a concrete slab floor and a metal lath and plaster ceiling. The interior surfaces of the adobe walls have a smooth trowelled plaster finish. An original 12 inch thick adobe brick partition wall separates the shop from two storage rooms and a small bathroom on the east. One of those rooms is used for tool storage and measures 12 feet square. Access to that room from the shop is from a non-original doorway cut into the adobe partition

wall.

The four stall automobile maintenance shop at the central bay measures 20 feet deep by 34 feet long. It is separated from the north wing of the building by an adobe wall which also serves to support part of the roof framing. Interior walls are finished with smooth trowelled plaster and the ceiling is plaster on metal lath.

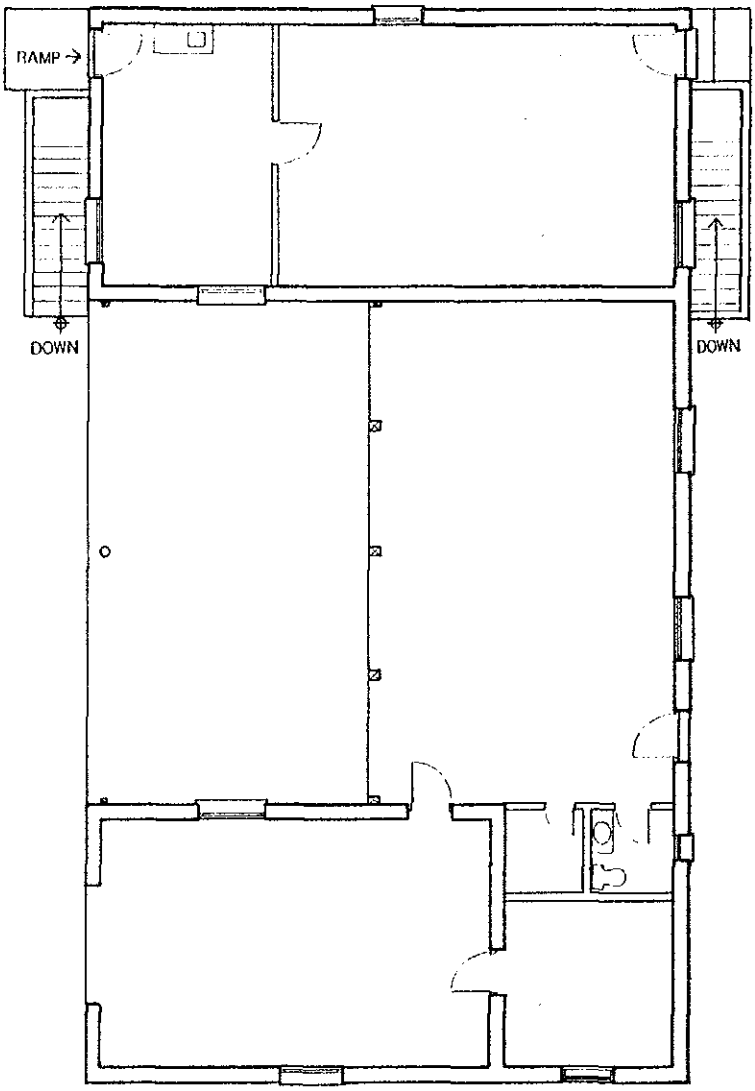
The interior of the north wing contains two rooms. Their original functions are unknown. The largest room is at the east end of the wing and measures 28 feet deep by 17 feet wide. It is currently used as a conference room and the original wall finishes are concealed by furred out sheet panelling. The west room measures 17 feet wide by 12 feet deep and is currently used as an employee's lounge.

Beneath the north wing is a full basement measuring 18 feet wide by 40 feet long. Its walls are constructed of cast-in-place reinforced concrete and it has a concrete slab floor. The basement ceiling is the underside of the first floor structure which is built of a six inch thick concrete slab on seven inch by five inch concrete beams spaced at three feet four inches on center. A one foot by one foot reinforced cast concrete girder is centrally located and spans the length of the room. There are two exterior entrances to the basement; one on the west wall, and one on the east wall. Both feature original wood panel and sash, stile and rail doors, and each are accessed by an exterior flight of concrete steps.

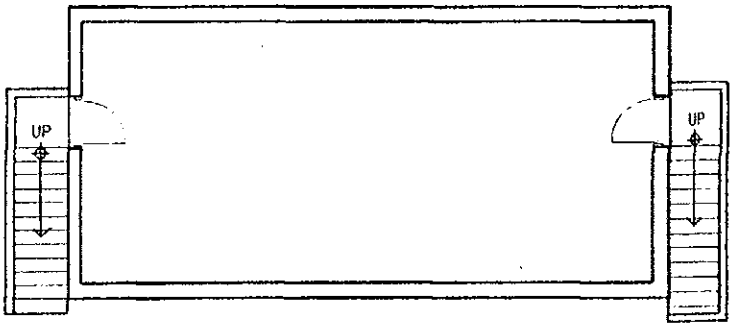
Name / Title: Jim Woodward, Architect

Affiliation: Woodward Architectural Group

Date: December 15, 1993



FLOOR PLAN



BASEMENT PLAN